

Remarks/Arguments

In response to the Office Action of August 11, 2005, claims 15, 16, 20, 23-26, 28 and 30 have been amended.

In the August 11, 2005 Office Action, claims 15-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,112,502 to Frederick ("Frederick"). Frederick, however, does not teach or suggest the respective automatic comparing steps recited in independent claims 15 and 23. The Examiner has cited to column 6, lines 41-47 of Frederick as teaching a comparing step. This passage from Frederick reads as follows:

The storage locations for items that are not tracked to patients are preferably marked to show a desired level or quantity (a "par value") of medical items that should be kept in the storage location. If the level of medical items in the location drops and a user observes that it is below par value, the user may scan the indicia with the reading device.

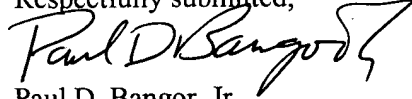
It is respectfully submitted, however, that such passage from Frederick does not teach an automatic comparing step as recited in the pending claims as currently amended wherein the current quantity of an item at a given location is automatically compared with a par level set for the item. Moreover, Frederick does not teach the step of generating a restocking package, in response to the automatic comparing, when the current quantity of an item is below its par level, as is also recited in the pending claims as currently amended.

In the method of Frederick, the user must first know what the par level is, or recognize, with the help of visual aids, that the current quantity of an item is below par value. The user in Frederick must then scan an indicia to order the generation of a restocking package. In contrast, in the claimed invention, a bin or storage location is first identified. Then, the current quantity or inventory of items remaining in that bin or location is input. Thereafter, the user is relieved of any further operations. The user need not know the par value of that item for that location or recognize that the current quantity is below par level. After the location and current quantity are provided, the system automatically compares the current quantity to a par level of that item, and the restocking package is generated in response to that comparison. It is respectfully submitted that the claimed invention is simpler to operate from the user's stand point, enables the "back end" processes to be carried out seamlessly, and ensures that the proper item count is available at each location within the shelving system.

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Applicants have made a diligent effort to place the instant application in condition for allowance.
Accordingly an early favorable Office Action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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